

Undoubtedly, Suzi Quatro broke down the barriers for many female rock stars with her tough, leather-clad look and catchy pop/rock tunes during the glam rock years of the early '70s. A big ABBA fan herself, Suzi enthusiastically accepted the offer to join our Famous ABBA Fans Gallery. With her fantastic cover of Does Your Mother Know that she recently recorded, she certainly deserves her place in the ABBA annals.

**At what time did ABBA enter your life, and when did you become a fan?**

I worked with ABBA way back when Ring Ring was a single. We did a TV show together in Belgium and lots of TV after that. We ran into each other quite a bit. Their style wasn't exactly finalised yet. I didn't actually become a fan until Waterloo. I thought they were fab, and they turned the *Eurovision Song Contest* on its head.

**What are your memories of meeting the ABBA members?**

Nice people - very normal.

**In your opinion, what is the greatest merit of ABBA's music?**

The simplicity.

**Why are ABBA still so successful today?**

Good songs, good melodies, good song structure. It all stands the test of time. A good song is a good song.

**Do you agree that ABBA successfully took on different musical styles?**

No. I would say that they were and are a 'pop' band, which I consider to be a compliment.

**During the recent RTL ABBA Tribute Show you demonstrated the similarities between Beethoven and ABBA on the piano. How classical is ABBA, and how pop is Beethoven?**

It's an even trade-off, as I said on the show. Beethoven was the pop writer for the classical era. ABBA were influenced by this. It's in every song they ever wrote. I know because I also studied classical piano, and Beethoven was my favourite, too.

**Do you think ABBA were underestimated by the critics in the 70s?**

Of course. It was popular not to like them. They weren't 'cool'.

**How important was ABBA's image for their success?**

They were good-looking enough, not unobtainable. The look was important, and the balance was perfect.

**Could you compare this with the importance**

**of the image for your own success?**

Yes, again. I was accessible, cute - not gorgeous, not big-busted - a little tough, but feminine. It worked!

**How aware are you of the fact that you are a role model for many female musicians?**

Of course, I get told this all the time by just about every woman in the industry. However, I did not have a role model. I had to make it up as I went along. Somebody had to kick the door down, and it turned out to be me, just by being me. I did not and would not change; I had to make it on my own terms.

**How did the duet with Andy Scott for the ABBA Tribute Show come about?**

They asked if I wanted to contribute. I am a big fan, so I said yes. I had worked with Andy before. He produced my *Back to the Drive* album, and we are good friends. Does Your Mother Know was his suggestion and perfect for me.

**Is Does Your Mother Know also your favourite ABBA song?**

It was the perfect one for me to cover, but my absolute favourite is *The Winner Takes It All*.

**How difficult is it to cover an ABBA song?**

Not difficult at all. You just need to take the song and put your own stamp on it. But I must say, I was surprised that I was able to put such a strong stamp on one of their songs.

**What is your favourite ABBA period?**

I like it when the two couples were breaking up. It gave it all a new serious and heartfelt dimension. It got serious suddenly.

**You have an impressive career yourself. What do you consider its highlights so far?**

All of it! This year, I celebrate 50 years in the business. I have sold 55 million records, and, in fact, until ABBA, I beat the Beatles in record sales in Australia! Then, they beat me ...

**You were also very successful in several television and theatre productions.**

I appeared for three years on [the TV series]



*Happy Days*, alongside The Fonz (Henry Winkler). I have done West End musicals and have written a musical. I have written my autobiography and have done a one-woman show based around this. I have had my own television talk show and have been on BBC Radio 2 since 1999 with my own show. Also, going to Broadway with my one-woman show, *Unzipped*, based on my autobiography of the same title, was a highlight. In 2015, I am releasing a poetry book. I could never pick just one highlight.

***If you had to make a choice as to which Suzi Quatro hit is the closest to your heart, which would it be?***

Difficult. Can The Can was the first one and therefore important; then there were Devil Gate Drive, just a great single that captured that live feel, which is hard to do; If You Can't Give Me Love, a wonderful song and perhaps Chinn and Chapman's best; and, more up to date, the new single from the four-CD box set with the same name, *The Girl From Detroit City*, which was released this year in August/September, to celebrate this special 50th anniversary.

***Could you describe the working process with Mike Chapman, with whom you have created so many great records?*** We get along great. We both respect each other and still work together today. Mike never brought me a song that wasn't written for me. He always picks the best of my own compositions and gets great vocals from me every time. He is a special, talented man.

***How do you appreciate the album Mike Chapman has produced for ABBA's Agnetha, Wrap Your Arms Around Me?***

Fantastic! If anyone can get the best out of her, Mike's your man.

***Your biggest US hit was your duet with Chris Norman. What is the story behind the song Stumblin' In?***

We were at an awards ceremony in Cologne. I was also recording If You Knew Suzi at the same time. All of us went to an after-hours party, and there was a band. I dragged Chris up, reluctantly, to jam. Mike Chapman was there, too. He loved the sound and the look, and the idea came... The song was written that night. We put the demo down in the studio the next day, and the rest is history...

***What are your plans for the future?*** Keep working, keep enjoying this god-given long career. I love what I do and feel very blessed in my chosen profession.